



SUSAN COMBS, COMMISSIONER

TEXAS DEPARTMENT
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May 26, 2005

The Honorable Kevin Brady
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Brady:

I respectfully request your support of increased opportunities for agriculture exports by improving foreign market access for U.S. products.

Agriculture's dependence on the export market has steadily increased since the early 1990s. More than \$3 billion in agricultural commodities are exported from Texas each year, generating more than one-fourth of our agricultural cash receipts. Every dollar in agriculture exports generates an additional \$1.61 in economic activity at the farm level and jobs in every industry sector of the state.

Free-trade agreements, like the Central America – Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA-DR), are important for Texas. Such agreements provide increased access to markets for our producers and begin to create a level playing field, which is key to keeping American agriculture profitable and strong. Creating new markets for agribusiness is also advantageous to support a growing economy and improving the overall U.S. trade balance.

I urge you to support new export opportunities for agriculture through trade agreements. Please feel free to contact me if you would like more information on agriculture exports by Texas producers and companies.

Sincerely,

Susan Combs
Commissioner

SC/clb

cc: Texas Delegation
Secretary Mike Johanns, USDA

*Making Texas the nation's
leader in agriculture, while
promoting excellence in
children's nutrition, rural
economic development and
providing efficient and
extraordinary service.*